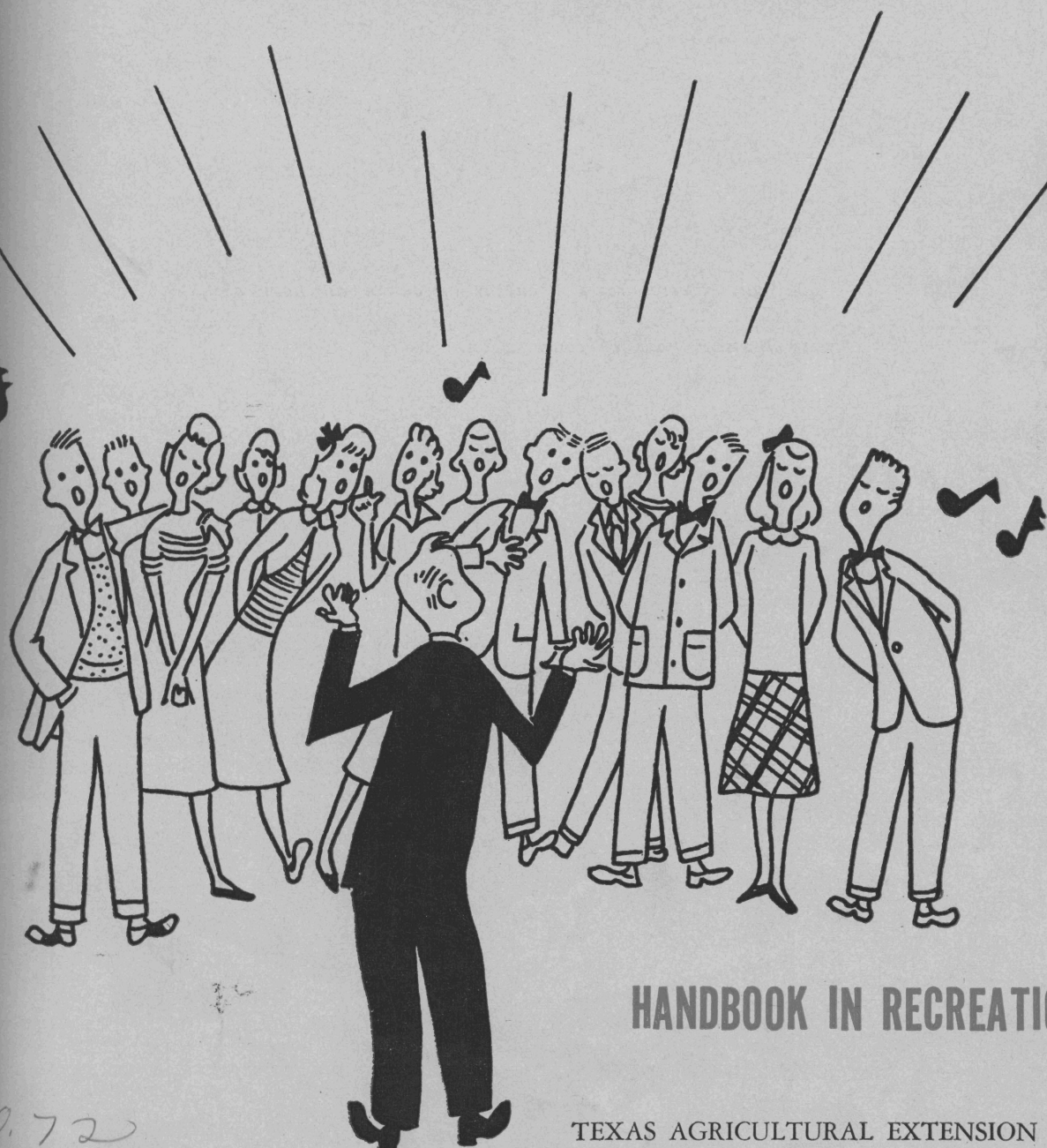


# IT'S FUN TO BE A LEADER

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## HANDBOOK IN RECREATION

TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE  
J. E. HUTCHISON, DIRECTOR, COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS

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*"You can discover more about a person in an hour of  
play than a year of conversation."*

—PLATO

# IT'S FUN TO BE A LEADER!

LUCILLE H. MOORE  
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A small boy once defined recreation as: "It's what you do when you don't have to." Recreation provides relaxation from stress and tension of the everyday job. It is an adventure in reading, hobbies, special interests and sharing with others.

## QUALITIES OF A GOOD RECREATION LEADER

The recreation leader should have or develop these qualifications:

1. Enjoys working with people.
2. Has a keen love of good fun.
3. Is democratic.
4. Is prepared.
5. Makes himself inconspicuous.
6. Is a sharer.
7. Is patient and kind.
8. Develops skills and techniques.

## WORKING WITH A GROUP

The good leader does not do all the planning nor all the work. How well the recreation leader works with others can be the secret of his success.

A group or committee should plan all events. The planning committee may serve for one event or for a long period to provide an overall recreation program. The leader should help the committee members look at the total program. What do members enjoy doing? What new interests would they like? Make a calendar of events. Vary the program to give new experiences. Here is the place to "be democratic." Encourage each member to express his ideas and to take responsibility.

When the program is given, be sure each member of the committee is prepared for his part. Several individuals should be involved in leading and should know their responsibility to the program. Care should be used in choosing leaders for the various activities. Many prospective leaders become discouraged because they are pushed into activities they are not able to do well.

A good leader is one who makes himself dispensable. Behind-the-scene leadership is a quality the recreation leader should develop.

*"A leader is best*

*When people hardly know he exists.*

*Not so good when people acclaim him.*

*Worse when they despise him.*

*Fail to honor people,*

*They will fail to honor you,*

*But of a good leader, who talks little,*

*When his work is done, his aim fulfilled,*

*They will all say, 'We did this ourselves.'"*

—LAO-TSE, CHINESE PHILOSOPHER.

## TEN TIPS FOR GOOD LEADER

### 1. SHOW ENTHUSIASM!



Seventy-five percent of the success of a leader depends on enthusiasm. Begin with the idea that each person expects to have a wonderful time and never let him down. Enthusiasm is as contagious as the measles. Make it seem effortless — pep that takes work does not go over!

### 2. PLAN THE PROGRAM!

Know exactly what to do, how to do it and what material or equipment is needed. Begin with something familiar and simple and save the best until last. Alternate active and quiet games. Prepare more games than will be needed for the allotted time. Have variety in the program. Keep the group moving quickly from one game to another without completely upsetting the formation each time. Be full of surprises!

### 3. KEEP YOUR HEAD!

Remember, be a leader but not a boss. No matter what happens, keep the situation under control. The players will have as much confidence in the leader as the leader has in himself.



#### 4. KNOW THE GAMES!

A good leader must know tunes, words and directions before he can teach them to others. Experiment before the mirror, family or friends, if possible. Do not refer to notes or directions while teaching the game as this diverts attention and spoils the fun. Remember, you are an expert.

#### 5. EXPLAIN BRIEFLY— DEMONSTRATE!

Get players into the correct formation at once. Arrange partners as much as possible to cover any embarrassment the backward players may feel about starting the game. Simplify the directions. Explain only a small part of the action at first. Demonstrate. If possible, in teaching folk games, work with a group beforehand so they can put on the demonstration.

#### 6. USE YOUR VOICE!

But do not yell. Speak up so everyone in the room can hear the directions. *Pitch the voice low.* If the group is noisy, wait until it is quiet before saying a word. Or try raising your hand which is a signal for those watching to be quiet and raise their hands too. If the group is large, you may need to use a whistle.

#### 7. OVERLOOK MISTAKES!

Remember, games are being taught for fun, not for perfection. If mistakes are made, stop the action and point out the errors with jovial good humor. Try to be general about it without mentioning those who are making mistakes. Some people may need extra help. Give it to them *without* scolding.

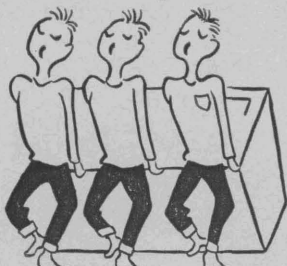
#### 8. HAVE THE EQUIPMENT READY!

Prepare and collect everything needed for each game ahead of time, and have it at your fingertips. Pick helpers to organize the group and distribute material.

#### 9. DO NOT DO IT ALL YOURSELF!

Organize a team of three or four helpers ahead of time to share the responsibility. One helper could lead active games, one

quiet games and one could be in charge of songs.



#### 10. KNOW WHEN TO STOP!

Play the game until all are enjoying it, but stop before anyone loses interest.

*TEST: If you had a good time the party must have been a success!*

### HOW TO LEAD A GAME

#### Selection

1. Select a game the group can play—physically and mentally.

2. Select a game suitable to the meeting place.

3. Select a game suitable to the age group.



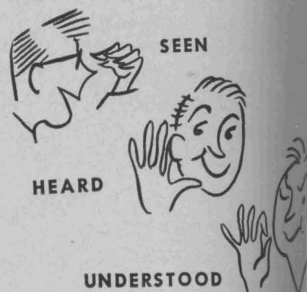
#### Preparation

1. Know the game from memory.
2. Practice it before a close friend, member of the family or a mirror.
3. Collect any equipment needed.



#### Presentation

1. Be enthusiastic (look as if you are having fun).
2. Get the attention of the group before giving instructions.
3. Arrange the group for the game.
4. Explain how to play the game and, if necessary, demonstrate.
5. Ask for questions (to see if the instructions were clear).
6. Play the game.
7. Correct mistakes or misunderstandings.
8. Play the game.
9. Have fun.
10. Stop the game while the players are still having fun.





## Evaluation



1. Did the game fit the time, place and group?
2. Did you have fun leading the game?
3. Did the group enjoy playing it?
4. Was your presentation clear?
5. How can you do better next time?

## EXAMPLE OF HOW TO LEAD A GAME

### ELEPHANT

The players stand in a circle. "It" approaches a player and "puts on his trunk" (by placing fist to fist at the end of his nose). This player does the same (puts on trunk) while the players on either side of him make elephant's ears (by placing their cupped hands behind the first player's ears). The last player to get into position must exchange places with "It." The game continues.

Note: If the circle is large have two "Its."

### SELECTION



1. This game is suitable to any group because it requires little physical activity and is easily understood.
2. It may be played indoors or outdoors.
3. It may be played with any age group.

### PREPARATION

1. Study the game until it is known from memory.
2. Practice it before someone to see if he can understand and follow your instructions.
3. No equipment is needed.

### PRESENTATION

1. Look as if you are having a good time.
2. Do not give instructions until the group is quiet and ready to listen.

3. Have the group stand in a circle.
4. Stand where you can see all the players.
5. Explain how "It" will face a player and put on his elephant's trunk.
6. Demonstrate by placing fist to fist at the end of the nose.
7. Demonstrate with a player.
8. Explain about the ears and how they are made.



9. Demonstrate with a player.
10. Ask for questions.
11. Answer questions.
12. To secure "It" the leader may start the game. One of the players will be the last to get into position, thus he will be "It."
13. The leader steps back where the entire group may be seen. Keep the game moving.
14. Play the GAME — have FUN — STOP game before the group loses interest.



## EVALUATION



1. Did YOU have fun leading the game?
2. Did the game fit the time, place and group?
3. Did the group enjoy playing the game? If not—why?
4. Did everyone try to play the game?
5. Was your presentation clear?
6. How could you do better next time?

## *6 S's of Recreation for Meetings*

The program must be planned so that members will have the personal satisfaction of participation and will develop the feeling of belonging to the group. By including some or all the 6 S's more people can participate. The business meeting and special program are not included here.

### 1. *STARTERS*

Ice breakers or mixers should be used as the members arrive to give them something to do, see, or talk about. This welds the group into a unit. Games such as "Bingo," "Odd or Even," "Who Am I?", a guessing contest at the door and exhibits are good ice breakers.

### 2. *SONGS*

Singing is the universal language and should be a part of every meeting. Good singing near the beginning of the program will set the mood for the entire meeting. Use a variety of songs.

### 3. *SPIRITUAL RECREATION*

A brief devotional period will relieve tension. This may include Bible reading, prayer, special music, poems, stories of the writing of hymns or special effects to set a mood.

### 4. *STRETCHERS*

Stretchers give the members an opportunity to relax. Action songs, stunts, specialities or simply standing are good at this time.

### 5. *SOCIALIZERS*

Socializers should follow the educational phase of the meeting. This brings the group together for its social development. It provides the feeling of "wasn't it good to be here!" Games, music and refreshments are socializers.

### 6. *SIGNATURE*

End the meeting so that all will know when it is over. This can be done by singing, a friendship circle or by prayer.

## **HOW TO PLAN A PARTY**

Plan a party that will start with simple games and progress to the more difficult without tiring the players too soon.

### **Preparty Game**

Preparty game should begin the minute the first guests arrive. This keeps early arrivals in the spirit of the occasion and starts them participating, laughing and relaxing.

### **Get Acquainted or Warmer-upper**

Use a game which helps people learn names and start talking.

A seated circle is the best type of starting formation because:

1. All can see each other.
2. It welds the group together.
3. All the guests must go to the circle to have a place to sit.

Note: Have only the number of chairs for guests expected.

### **Quiet and Active Circle Games**

Several games can be played in the seated circle formation. Alternate quiet and active games, but avoid constant changing formation.

## Active Standing Games

Active standing games require bodily movement—especially, standing, walking or running. The easier games should be played first. The progressive circle, such as “Bingo”, may be played at this time.

## Resting Activities

After active games the players will need rest, but do not let the party break up. Use games that require little organization and may not have all players participating at one time. Examples are quiet games, seated relays, mystery games, singing, team games, creative dramatics and refreshments.

## High Point Games

Active and progressive games, singing and folk games, special events and surprises are used at the climax of the party. If squares are used, they should be saved until last since they are harder to learn and tend to break the group down rather than keep it together.

## Ending

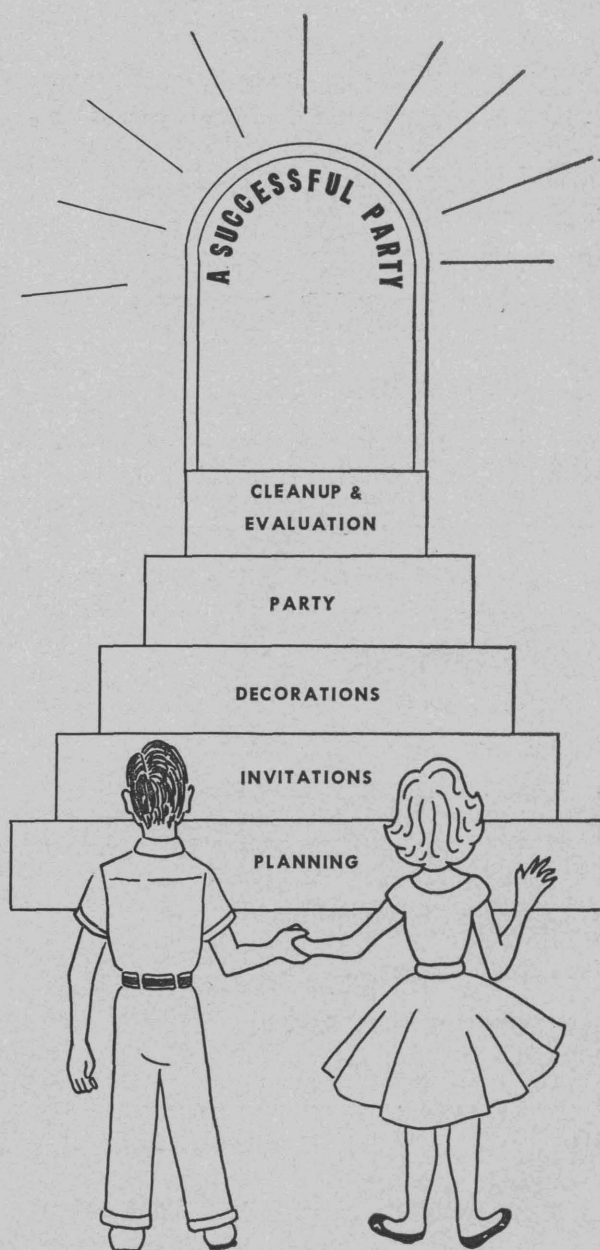
Plan a definite ending for the party so that the group will know it is time to go home.

## General Hints

*Recreation is fun*—Do not regiment it or create an attitude of perfection or orderliness which takes away the fun.

*Always be a part of the group*—Stay with the group, but you will be able to observe what is happening and be a better leader if you do not play the game you are leading.

*Good planning*—is the secret of good recreation.





## WORK SHEET FOR THE PARTY

Date..... Place..... Time: Start..... Number expected:  
Close..... Male..... Female.....

General chairman..... THEME.....

OVERALL COMMITTEE (Composed of chairmen of other committees)

- 1.....Chairman
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....

### PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

- 1.....Chairman
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....

### DECORATION COMMITTEE

- 1.....Chairman
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....

### FOODS COMMITTEE

- 1.....Chairman
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....

### GAMES COMMITTEE

- 1.....Chairman
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....

### CLEAN UP COMMITTEE

- 1.....Chairman
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....

### OTHER COMMITTEES

- 1.....Chairman
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....

### LIST GAMES

- |         |         |         |
|---------|---------|---------|
| 1.....  | 1.....  | 1.....  |
| 2.....  | 2.....  | 2.....  |
| 3.....  | 3.....  | 3.....  |
| 4.....  | 4.....  | 4.....  |
| 5.....  | 5.....  | 5.....  |
| 6.....  | 6.....  | 6.....  |
| 7.....  | 7.....  | 7.....  |
| 8.....  | 8.....  | 8.....  |
| 9.....  | 9.....  | 9.....  |
| 10..... | 10..... | 10..... |

### LEADERS

### MATERIALS

## HOW TO LEAD SONGS

Music should be an important part of the club meeting. Group singing helps club members feel at ease, lose their reserve and center their interest on the program of the meeting. The song leader may stimulate enthusiasm or quiet a boisterous group, depending on his selection of songs.

1. List the songs to be used—have a variety such as folk, part, popular, work, action, hymns and spirituals.

2. Start with familiar songs; sing more than one and then introduce the new ones.

3. Get the group set for the start of the song. Give a decisive movement which will bring everyone in on the first word.

4. Variety may be brought into the program by having part of the group hum, whistle or clap the rhythm while others sing. Take full advantage of special talent in groups by letting them sing solo verses.

5. Think of the audience as individuals, not as a crowd.

6. Encourage singing for quality and harmony and not just for volume.

7. Use only the time allotted to this part of the program.

8. For the final song, choose one that all like to sing so that an effective ending will be made.

9. Have a good accompanist.

10. Endeavor to make good songs popular. Sing them often enough to learn the words so books will not always be needed.

In song leading: One hundred percent "would be" leadership can be broken into 60 percent personality, 30 percent tact and poise and 10 percent musical ability.

1. Be enthusiastic.

2. Have a sense of humor.

3. Be a leader, not an entertainer.

4. When teaching a new song:

a. Know the song.

b. Sing it for the group.

c. Have the group sing it.

d. Work out difficult spots.

5. Use your hand or hands to lead.

## TIPS FOR GOOD SONG LEADERS



1. **PERSONALITY** — Put your best side forward; smile and appear to be having a good time.

2. **ATTENTION** — Raise your hands before the singing starts so that every eye is on you. Be a leader and take command.

3. **BREATH**—It takes breath to sing. Help your crowd to sing by training them to breathe with the cue given by your hands.

4. **BEGINNING** — A good beginning assures good singing. Give definite signal for the first word of the song and for each succeeding phrase.

5. **WORDS** — Direct and "beat out" the words. Do not be too concerned with counting the time. Speak the words and each syllable with your hands.

6. **HOLDS**—Get a few special effects by holding on to a naturally adaptable high note or two.

7. **TURN IT OFF** — Make the end clean and sure but not too soon. Indicate the ending with your hands.

## RECREATION KIT

A recreation kit is necessary and practical for the leader. It is a collection of simple equipment that can be used for many purposes. It could include:

Balloons	Marbles
Beans	Newsprint
Beater (boy's sock with crumpled paper in toe)	Paper and pencils
Bottles (milk, soft drink)	Paper bags
Cards (alphabet, playing, postal)	Ping pong balls
Checkers	Pins (clothes, straight, safety)
Crayons and chalk	Rope or heavy cord
Dominoes	Scissors
Gloves (canvas)	String
Handkerchiefs or scarves	Tin cans
Homemade games	Whisk brooms
Jar rings or quoits	Yark sticks

File copies of all new material, planned programs and suggestions for recreational events.

These nine questions provide a check on the development of a leader and program.\*

## RECREATION FOR HOME, CLUB AND COMMUNITY

1. Does your club have members who are prepared to lead a variety of games at any given time?
2. Does your club have a kit of recreational supplies—reference material on games and equipment for games?
3. Does your club have a committee who plans activities in detail before the program?
4. Does your club have parties, picnics, dinners or special events where all the family is included?
5. Does your recreation leader attend training sessions in recreation where new ideas are exchanged and materials learned?
6. Does your program include a variety of activities?
7. Does the recreation leader teach others to lead and give them a chance to help?

8. Does your club help provide recreation for groups other than your own?
9. Does your secretary keep a record of social recreation activities?

## SELF EVALUATION FOR LEADER

### AS A LEADER DID I

- Have fun leading the game?.....
- Know all the games from memory?.....
- Have help in leading?.....
- Keep the game moving?.....
- Have the equipment ready?.....
- Stand in the right place?.....
- Have the attention of the group?.....
- Select games all could play?.....
- Get everyone to play?.....

### LIST THE GAMES ENJOYED MOST BY THE GROUP

.....

.....

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### LIST THE GAMES ENJOYED LEAST—WHY?

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### THINGS TO DO (OR NOT TO DO) NEXT TIME

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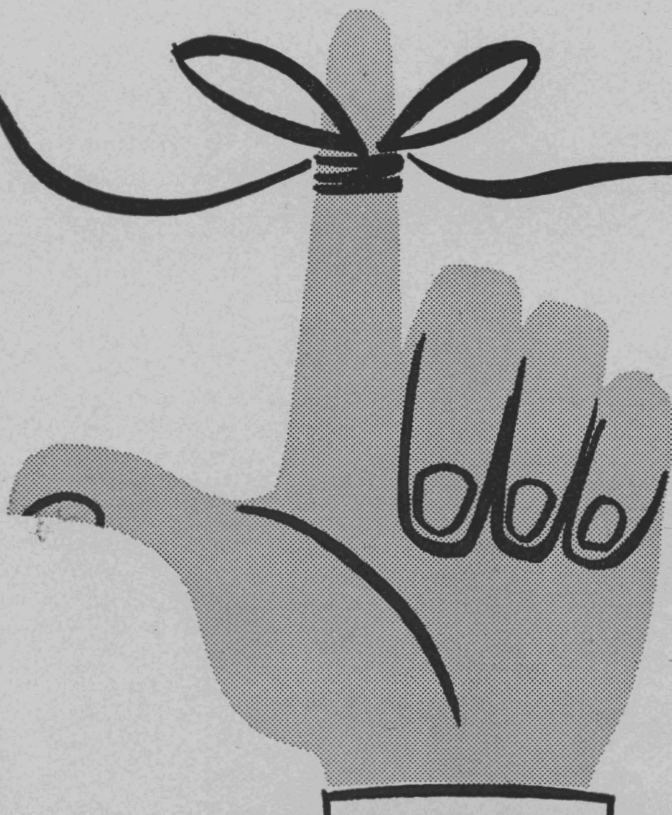
\*"A Local Leader's Guide in Recreation and Rural Arts," published by the National Committee on Boys and Girls Club Work.



*Remember This...*

**Use Your Ability: You Have Plenty  
Start Now!**

**Your Most Important Tool In Leadership  
Is Your Attitude**



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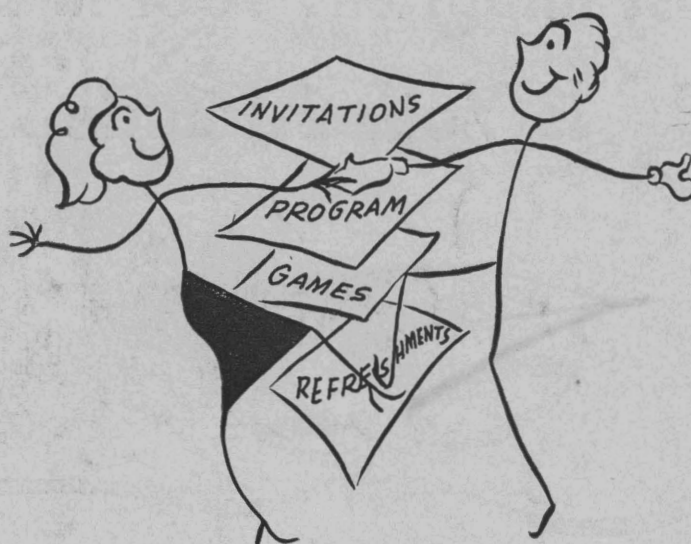
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National Recreation Association 8 West Eighth Street, New York 11, N. Y.

Rural Recreation

Parties Plus

Easy Stunts



## Acknowledgment

The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of all groups and individuals in the preparation of this publication. Special recognition is due Joseph R. Cardenuto, extension recreation specialist, Pennsylvania State University, for his suggestions on the cartoons.